



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

Conservation Field Trip Grant

2006–2007

—Guidelines—

PURPOSE

The Missouri Department of Conservation is pleased to offer once again the *Conservation Field Trip Grant* to Missouri educators. This grant program, funded by the Missouri Department of Conservation, is designed to distribute funds in amounts up to **\$700** to public, private, parochial or home-school educators interested in taking students on field trips related to fish, wildlife and natural habitats.

Field trips can engage students in learning about fish, wildlife and natural habitats and their conservation. These learning experiences support science and other academic concepts being taught in the classroom. Field trips are not restricted to Missouri Department of Conservation sites; however, field trip sites must be related to fish, wildlife or natural habitats. The Missouri Department of Conservation provides opportunities for field trips around the state including aquatic education programs, nature center programs, fish hatchery programs, outdoor skills programs, conservation events, nature hikes, etc. Grant funds will give educators the financial means to extend and strengthen student learning experiences outside the classroom.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Any educator in a school or school district in the state of Missouri, including public, private and parochial schools—kindergarten to grade 12—may apply for a grant. Educators in home-school groups are also eligible. Each grant request shall be for one specific field trip. Educators are encouraged to team up to apply for a grant. For example, two or three 8th grade teachers can take their science classes on the same field trip, or the 3rd, 4th & 5th grade teachers can take their students to the same field trip. Regardless of the number of grades and students included in the team application, the total possible award is \$700 per application. Schools and home school groups can apply for multiple grants, up to a total of \$1,400. Each student, however, will only be eligible to attend one field trip. If multiple applications are sent from the same school or home school group, applications must clearly indicate that different students will be participating in different field trips. If this is not clear, one or more of the applications will be considered ineligible.

MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNT

The maximum grant award is \$700 per application, with a maximum of \$1,400 awarded to a school or home school group.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Submit completed grant applications to the Missouri Department of Conservation. Applications will be accepted between September 1, 2006, and March 1, 2007. **Faxed or electronic applications will not be accepted. Awards will be made on a first-requested, first-awarded basis for eligible applications until available grant funds have been awarded.** The Department will notify applicants in writing 30-days from receipt of application whether their proposal has been funded. Grant recipients will receive a cooperative agreement for review and signature prior to reimbursement of transportation costs up to the awarded amount. Field trips must be taken after applicant receives notification of grant award and by May 25th, 2007, at the latest.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR GRANT FUNDING

- Grant application is complete and is postmarked September 1, 2006, through March 1, 2007. **Faxed or electronic applications will not be accepted.**
- Grant request is for transportation costs only.
- Field trip mileage does not exceed 100 miles each way (200 miles round trip).
- The amount of grant funds requested for transportation costs does not exceed \$7.00 per student.
- A minimum of 20 students are planned to attend the field trip.
- Individual students are only eligible for one field trip.
- Other costs associated with this field trip (for example, admission and food) are to be covered by other sources of funding.
- Field trip is planned to take place after notification of grant award and prior to May 25, 2007.
- Field trip is to a fish-, wildlife- or natural habitat-related site in Missouri.

- Field trip addresses specific science or other academic instructional goals and is connected to classroom instruction.

NOTE: Awards will be made on a first-requested, first-awarded basis for eligible applications until available grant funds have been awarded.

Applicants are encouraged to take students to sites in their areas. Field trip sites eligible for grant funding include, but are not limited to:

- Missouri Department of Conservation nature and interpretive centers
- Missouri Department of Conservation shooting range and outdoor education centers
- Missouri Department of Conservation shooting ranges
- Missouri Department of Conservation areas and other natural areas
- Fish hatcheries
- State parks
- National wildlife refuges or forests in Missouri
- City and county parks
- Sites that support the study and increased understanding of Missouri's natural resources, in particular our fish and wildlife resources and natural habitats.

NOTE: Applicant is responsible for scheduling field trip with destination site. Receiving a grant award does not guarantee a reservation at the destination site.

SELECTION PROCESS

Missouri Department of Conservation staff will review all applications to determine eligibility. If deemed eligible, awards will be made on a first-requested, first-awarded basis until available grant funds have been awarded. Schools and home school groups can apply for multiple grants up to a total of \$1,400. Each student, however, will only be eligible to attend one field trip. If multiple applications are sent from the same school or home school group, applications must clearly indicate that different students will be participating in different field trips. If this is not clear, one or more of the applications will be considered ineligible.

FUND DISTRIBUTION

The signed cooperative agreement must be returned to the Department before funds will be disbursed. The grant funds will be paid after the field trip is completed and upon submission of a narrative and copies of actual transportation receipts.

ACCOUNTING AND FISCAL REQUIREMENTS

1. This is a reimbursement grant only, and the Missouri Department of Conservation is not providing or contracting for the provision of transportation services.
2. In order for transportation costs to be eligible for reimbursement, they must be approved in the application and incurred after the applicant is notified of grant award and by May 25th, 2007, at the latest.
3. Reimbursement requests (transportation receipts and narrative report) must be received within 15 business days following completion of the field trip or no later than June 4, 2007, whichever is earlier. The signed cooperative agreement must be returned to the Department before funds will be disbursed.
4. Only the amount incurred up to the awarded amount will be reimbursed. It will take 30 to 45 days for awardees to receive payment.
5. Grantees shall keep financial records for each grant in accordance with applicable government accounting standards. These records, as public records, shall be subject to inspection by the Missouri Department of Conservation and the state auditor during regular business hours throughout the grant period and for three years after the grant period ends. If any litigation, claim or audit is begun before the end of the three years, the records shall be retained until such proceeding is resolved.
6. The grantee is responsible for ensuring that the Missouri Department of Conservation receives copies of the audit report for any audit performed during the grant period or the following three years.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A one-page narrative and copies of all transportation receipts, must be submitted to the Field Trip Grant Coordinator (See contact information on application.) within 15 business days following completion of the field trip or no later than June 4, 2007, whichever is earlier. The transportation receipts must include the date of the field trip, who took the field trip, field trip destination, actual mileage and the cost of transportation. The narrative must describe what the students learned (refer to number 3 and 4 on application) during the field trip, how it benefited students and the actual number of students who participated in the field trip.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

Educators and organizations are encouraged to publicize grant awards. The credit line on press releases or publicity materials should read: The Conservation Field Trip Grant is made possible by the Missouri Department of Conservation.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Can I submit my application before or after the application period, September 1, 2006–March 1, 2007?

A: Only applications postmarked from September 1, 2006–March 1, 2007, will be considered for grants.

Q: Will applications for field trips already taken be eligible for 2006–2007 field trip grants?

A: No. Field trips must be taken after the applicant is notified of grant award and by March 25, 2007.

Q: Can the Department make an exception for less than 20 students to participate in the field trip?

A: No. To be eligible for award, Conservation Field Trip Grant applications must be for 20 or more students. Educators are encouraged to team up with another class, grade, school, school district or other home school educators to have a minimum of 20 students. Some additional examples include:

- The special-needs teachers from two different school districts plan a trip to the same site for their students.
- The 4th grade teachers from two different schools in the same district take their students to a nature center.
- A 9th grade science teacher teams up with 2nd grade teachers to take their students to the city park for a forest ecology program and tree planting activity.

Q: Why limit the mileage to 100 miles one way (200 round trip) for each field trip?

A: Applicants are encouraged to take field trips relatively close to home. There are field trip opportunities to natural sites all over the state, and it isn't necessary for students to travel more than 100 miles one way to experience a fish, wildlife or natural habitat-related site. We want students to spend more of their field trip time out-of-doors rather than riding in a bus or other vehicle.

Q: Are educators of Pre-K children eligible to apply for the grants?

A: No. Only educators of students in kindergarten through 12th grade are eligible to apply for this grant.

Q: Can more than one school in a district apply on the same application for the same grant?

A: Yes. If two or more schools want to work together to take students on the same field trip, they can submit one application. Please note, however, that the maximum amount that is awarded per grant is \$700.

Q: Can a school or home-school group apply for more than one grant?

A: Yes. Schools and home school groups can apply for more than one grant. Applicants must keep in mind all of the criteria when submitting applications, however. A maximum amount of \$1,400 will be awarded to the same school or home school group for eligible applications until all available funds have been awarded.

Q: Can the grant money be used to cover other expenses besides transportation costs?

A: No. This grant covers transportation costs only. Transportation costs include bus use or rental fee, personal vehicle mileage or gas, parking fees and bus driver salary.

Q: If awarded a grant, will the applicant get the grant money before the field trip is completed?

A: No. As the guidelines indicate, the Conservation Field Trip Grant is a reimbursement program. An awarded applicant will need to complete the field trip, prepare a short narrative report and submit the report with a copy of the receipt for actual transportation costs to the Department before a check will be issued.

Q: Will a trip to the zoo be considered an eligible field trip location?

A: A zoo could be an eligible field-trip location if all other criteria, including the trip's connection to specific academic instructional goals and classroom instruction, have been met. A field trip to the zoo to reward student performance, for example, would not be eligible.

Q: Is a field trip to a location outside of Missouri eligible for grant funding?

A: No. Field trips must be to a fish, wildlife or natural habitat-related site in Missouri.

Q: What Missouri Department of Conservation locations are eligible field trip sites?

A: Missouri Department of Conservation locations include all Conservation Department nature and interpretive centers, shooting range and outdoor education centers, shooting ranges, fish hatcheries, conservation areas, trails and natural areas. It also includes Department programs or events delivered at another site, such as Department Kids Fishing Events held at the city park. (To learn what opportunities are available near you, visit www.missouriconservation.org/areas/ or contact your nearest Conservation Department office.)

Q: Beside Conservation Department locations, what other places are considered fish, wildlife or natural habitat-related sites?

A: What is available in each community varies. Any site that gives your students the opportunity to experience nature could be your field trip destination. Possible non-Department sites include county or city parks, state parks, national wildlife refuges or forests in Missouri, local lakes and ponds, zoos and nature centers. To find out what is available in your community, check with your local chamber of commerce office or parks and recreation department. The Internet is also a valuable resource in finding possible field trip sites.

Q: Why do I need to keep copies of my grant application, agreement and final reports?

A: Once you sign the cooperative agreement to accept the grant award, you are agreeing to fulfill the requirements spelled out in the grant guidelines and the agreement. One requirement is that all financial records related to the agreement must be available for the Department to view. Financial records include copies of the awarded application, cooperative agreement and final report (narrative and transportation receipts).

For more information contact:

Norma Gilliland
Missouri Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 180
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180
Norma.Gilliland@mdc.mo.gov
573-522-4115, ext. 3808